

Carranza, Amankaya

From: M. W. Smith <manfredsmith@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 11:26 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Main Library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

From: Manfred Smith
9085 Flamepool Way
Columbia, MD 21045
To: Christina Rigby and Dr. Opel Jones
Re: Main Library
Date: April 05, 2023

Dear Representatives,

Just read about the \$144,000,000 for a new main library. I have a better idea: how about keeping the one we have and lowering taxes? How useful are physical libraries in a world where everything is going electronic? I have not visited any library for 5 years. Perhaps the old one works just fine?

Best,

Manfred Smith

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Barbara McClayton <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2023 10:52 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Library Funding in the CIP

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

The Executive's Capital Improvements Budget has requested funding for two important library projects. I am writing to ask that the Council include full funding for both projects in the approved CIP. Libraries change lives. There is no other entity in the public or private sector that has the ability to reach as many people. Public Libraries are uniquely situated to serve people. Schools educate our youngsters. 50 plus centers provide a sense of community to people in that age group. HeadStart reaches the youngest children. People self select to interact with these entities. Libraries can provide information to direct residents who do not know which services they need! Libraries are accessible, open to everyone and exist to provide information service to everyone. I'd like to give you examples from our family. Our small kids learned how to learn in a group by attending storytime. The singing times tables cassettes taught multiplication tables to the primary school students. One of our kids took her library card away to college, because she learned how to use the Maryland online databases in high school and continued to use them in college and VISTA. Wherever her work has taken her, she always applies for a library card in her new community. My mother's quality of life was greatly improved by the availability of books on CD. My spouse loves to borrow music CD's. Programming has helped me make the transition from work to retirement. Howard County has an exemplary library system. The State requirements regarding per capita services must be viewed as a starting point for our County. The commitment that the Council makes now to plan for the new southwest branch and construction of the new Central Branch will allow the County to leverage State funds to ensure that we can meet our increasing needs while maintaining excellence. As we grow a more diverse community, the need for accessible services will only continue to grow. Please commit to support the CIP budget for Libraries.

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Chris Krupiarz <cjkrup@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 11:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCLS Lakefront Library Concerns

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

I would like to express to my concern about the budget for the new Lakefront Library and the process by which the design has been chosen.

If this budget is approved with a sole source contract, we are going to allow Howard Hughes, a Texas-based developer, to work with Heatherwick Studio, a London-based architectural firm, to have carte blanche control over one of the most critical buildings in our county.

Our county. Not their county. Our county.

HCLS is conducting listening sessions for Howard Countians to express what they would like in a new library and have that conveyed back to Howard Hughes and Heatherwick. I also heard that Heatherwick was invited to stroll the halls of our libraries to see what they were like. However, you don't need to do any of that with a local firm because they know our county. Employees of local firms don't need surveys to figure out what our citizens need because their neighbors tell them. Employees of local firms don't need tours of our libraries because they use them.

This evening I listened to the HCLS Board of Trustees meeting. Only a handful of high level slides were presented by the library system regarding the new plan and after a brief discussion, the plan was approved. Based on the review of previous minutes, this was the only time this plan was discussed by the Board. You may recall that in the recent response to the investigation by the County Auditor that the HCLS Board of Trustees Chair stated "The Board takes very seriously its obligation to oversee Library operations." And yet a \$143 million plan scant on details was approved within minutes.

That leaves the Council as the only entity left to ask the hard questions to ensure our money is well spent: How did this come about? What is Howard Hughes's interest? Is it the free \$38 million parking garage we would build for them? Will library patrons have to pay for parking? Why choose an architect that has never designed a library before? What happens when those grand plans fall apart like many of Heatherwick's other projects? How come the county didn't receive a detailed plan for this project? How sure are we about the \$20 million we need to get from the State?

I ask you to please do your due diligence prior to approving this budget.

We need a new library. But we need to ensure it is done right.

Sincerely,

Chris Krupiarz
Ellicott City, MD

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Kimberly Leigh Schreder <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 5:49 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Our roads are a mess and there is trash on the sides of our roads. We can't seem to maintain this county, yet our local government plans to spend 143 million to build another library when we have a fine library in Central. Why don't we just give the library a facelift instead of wasting our money?

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Marie Mead <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 8:12 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed lakefront library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

The cost of this proposed library in Columbia is obscene. Our taxes are so high. The cost of this is proof of how easy it is for officials to waste our hard earned money. Lower the property tax in Howard County if there is this much money to spend on something we don't need! Sincerely, Marie Mead

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Tonya Tiffany <tntfitness@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 5:11 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Concern about the new library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council Members,

While our county has a number of issues, I have been glad to raise my two sons here over the last 14 years. One of the issues that I have noticed though, is our willingness to spend way too much money on single projects here or there as opposed to being more frugal and spreading the money around in a way that is more equitable and able to be spread for several different projects.

My personal love for libraries began in elementary school when I had to walk to the local library after school to wait for my mom to get off of work. There are few places that make me feel as comfortable as a library or a bookstore. That being said, the proposed plan to spend 144 million dollars on the new library is not only outrageous it is an elitest waste of money.

Out of respect for your time, I will simply express my displeasure and hope that you will have the strength to say no to this egregious waste of money.

Too Blessed to be depressed,
Tonya Tiffany

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Chris Krupiarz <cjkrup@outlook.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 12:37 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Re: HCLS Lakefront Library Concerns

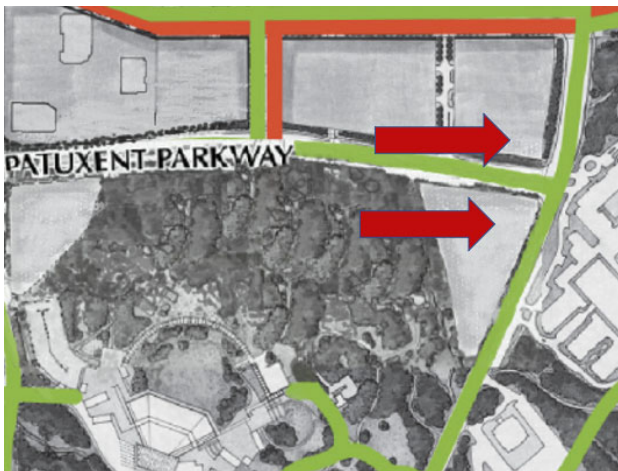
[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

I would like to clarify one point in my original about what Howard Hughes is getting from this. There seems to be a misconception that Howard Hughes is "donating" the land to the county or "providing" it. In fact, Councilwoman Rigby, you mentioned Howard Hughes would "give the land to the county" on Tuesday. From the library FAQ, Howard Hughes is not donating the land:

*Howard Hughes Corporation will provide at no cost to the County, the two sites in exchange for the current library site to develop in the future, after the new Lakefront Library is completed. The current library site has been slated for demolition as part of the Downtown Columbia plan (adopted in 2010 and updated in 2016), which recommended that a new library be built in Columbia's new Downtown. Symphony Woods Road and Little Patuxent Parkway will be realigned through the existing library site, as shown in the Downtown Columbia Plan, **and the residual land will be retained by Howard Hughes for future development.***

This is a land swap where Howard Hughes will end up with county land from the old library location which they will use for further development as they see fit. That will end up including land south of Union Jack's and the northeast corner of Symphony Woods. Both locations are prime real estate. Saying Howard Hughes is donating this land is like saying when baseball teams trade players they donate them to another team.



(Arrows added to where the Howard Hughes land will be according the Downtown Columbia Plan)

To be honest, I'm not even sure I care if they get that land. In fact, I would expect Howard Hughes to want something in return. They're a business not some benevolent caretaker of all things Rouse. But the County Executive made no mention of it nor can I find anywhere else but buried on this FAQ.

Please no longer use the word transparency if this is the way county business is conducted.

Sincerely,
Chris Krupiarz

From: Chris Krupiarz
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 11:50 PM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCLS Lakefront Library Concerns

Dear Council Members,

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I ask you to please do your due diligence prior to approving this budget.

We need a new library. But we need to ensure it is done right.

Sincerely,

Chris Krupiarz
Ellicott City, MD

Carranza, Amankaya

From: kcscb) <kcscb@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, April 22, 2023 4:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed New Library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Please hear your constituents who feel the projected cost and plans for a new Central Library are “way over the top”! As residents who grew up well versed in libraries, have raised children at the library, and continue in their retirement years to use the library on more than a weekly basis, we plead to “keep libraries libraries”! A library is a quiet, secure space with resources to do research, study, and to just explore and enjoy the pleasure of the “printed” word! Libraries were not intended to be Community Centers with food and entertainment venues - goodness knows, Columbia now has an overabundance of those offerings. Libraries are a “holding place” for the sharing and use of archival and current resources for furthering knowledge whether it be for educational, professional, or personal growth. Coffee, wine, food, games, community events, social venues and the like are widely available in Columbia and including those options in a Library not only increases the cost but reduces the atmosphere to that of a mall - where you can easily enjoy coffee, wine, food, gaming venues, theaters, entertainment/gaming venues, and book stores. Let’s “keep a library a library”!

1. That’s a LOT of money that could be used for other community needs
2. The proposal is not for a Library, but for a social venue.
3. I sincerely object to a survey that asks race, gender, and age. I thought Columbia turns a blind eye to those, since everyone “matters”.

Sent from my iPad

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Daniel Cohen <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Sent: Saturday, April 22, 2023 2:44 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: New Lakefront Library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I understand that there is a proposal to spend \$143 million for a showpiece lakefront library in downtown Columbia. Instead of spending our tax dollars on a building that we really don't need, why not spend it on something we do — another hospital, so that we don't have to leave the county for healthcare. Please remember for whom you work and whose money is being spent when considering this unnecessary expenditure. Thank you.

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Mary Ann Carroll <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Sent: Sunday, April 23, 2023 8:39 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: New library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Please don't spend this amount of money on a library when the HCC and HCPSS budgets are not fully funded. Support instead Dr. Willis's vision for a new building that will provide students with an affordable option compared to Lincoln tech. Also work to fully fund salary increases today and in the future. HCC staff raises have not kept up with the cost of living for many years and now merit increases do not go to base salaries only cola. This in essence means we can never get ahead.

Respass, Charity

From: Resident, Columbia <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 10:48 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: \$143 Million

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

\$143 million is too much for a library. I can't afford it and neither can you.

Carranza, Amankaya

From: lindaleslie@verizon.net
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 8:05 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support the New Library and Associated Housing in the Capital Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good evening,

I am writing to ask you to vote in favor of funding to support the new lakefront library plan in the Howard County capital budget. You will probably hear from folks that we don't need another library, or that we don't need a replacement library. I would propose that those folks are not in the loop with the full benefits of this plan, nor do they fully realize the critical role the library plays and will continue to play in our community. They also may not fully appreciate the benefit of the sister project, which will bring critical affordable housing to our community. Personally, I see this library as a focal point for our community, one that will allow us to serve everyone and bring opportunity to all, including the folks who will now be able to live in that community because of the affordable housing.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

- Linda Leslie
Council District 4

Carranza, Amankaya

From: Lauren Barnes <lobarnes1@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 2:12 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good Afternoon Councilmembers,

I am writing to express my severe concern, anger, and outrage over the plans for a \$143 million dollar library coming to Howard County instead of what we really need....a focus on schools!

I am absolutely disgusted by Calvin Ball's proposal for this library. THOUSANDS of HCPSS students are expected to learn each day while sitting in dilapidated buildings, trailers/temporaries, and overcrowded classrooms. The notion that our county government would even ENTERTAIN such a proposal is mind blowing to me! The budget for this library is absolutely unnecessary and is an irresponsible use of county funds.

I am writing to respectfully ask that a motion to move some (if not all) of that budget to our school system be made and considered by our county council. Our county likes to TALK about equity a lot. However, both our school board and our county government REPEATEDLY make policies and decisions that fly directly in the face of equity and justice. All of our students do not have access to the same conditions at schools and how many have lost transportation as well! Absenteeism, truancy etc are going to rise significantly with this new BOE policy and unfortunately, our most at-risk families are the ones who will be hurt the most.

A truly equitable and forward thinking decision would be for Howard County to look at the actual reality of our county and our families before proposing such a wasteful use of tax payer dollars. I do not know ONE constituent who thinks this library is a good idea or worth the ridiculous price tag. I definitely don't know ANY parents with kids in HCPSS that are ok with such an irresponsible use of funds when student needs are consistently not met.

I urge you to take this proposal seriously and fight it tooth and nail on behalf of your constituents in district 4. Our schools are some of the most deserving of attention and our families deserve better than a new, pretentious, unnecessary library in place of adequately funded schools.

Respectfully,
Lauren Barnes

Carranza, Amankaya

From: LINDA Wengel <lwengel@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 10:35 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Central library

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Just to let you know, DPZ believes the library project would surely have to go through the 16 step planning process outlined in the Downtown Plan. It was not part of the original FDP for the Lakefront Core.

Also, it certainly seems timely to review the seven year old DRRA.

Linda Wengel
Town Center

Respass, Charity

From: Chris Krupiarz <cjkrup@outlook.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 29, 2023 5:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Lakefront Library Concerns--Heatherwick & Star Ratings

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

After watching the capital budget work session regarding the library, I would like to make two observations:

The Heatherwick Tax

Perhaps you were provided with this information, but I have seen no dollar figures on how much Heatherwick Studio is going to inflate the cost of the library. As a reminder, London spent £53 million on a [bridge that never got built](#) that Heatherwick designed and both their Vessel project and Little Island were almost [double original cost estimates](#). Production of his new buses for London were stopped [because they cost too much](#). There's a reason why architects like Heatherwick (to paraphrase Mr. Fitchett's testimony) don't "lower" themselves to bid projects because then they would have to be accountable for cost. I have to wonder if the level of community frustration would be anywhere near what it is if the design shown had been in line with that of other libraries we see in Maryland. We heard a lot of talk of learning kitchens, maker spaces, and other amenities during Ms. Aikens's testimony. Those are all things I agree with having. But these can all be done without having to involve Heatherwick in any way. His studio isn't bringing any of this. In fact, given he's never designed a library before, he wouldn't even know where to begin. It's unclear to me why there seems to be a need to star struck by this studio. If people are intent on staying in this location and to allow Howard Hughes to proceed with a single source, the clear middle ground is to require Howard Hughes to reduce the square foot cost to a more reasonable amount and remove Heatherwick from the project.

The Fallacy of the Five Star Rating

There was much discussion about the star rating of the library. This rating is done by the Library Journal here is an entry from their FAQ:

Does the LJ Index measure the quality, excellence, effectiveness, value, or appropriateness of library services?

No, the index measures none of these. By definition, service outputs do not reflect quality, excellence, effectiveness, or value of services to the library's community. National-level data required to measure these aspects of library performance, even in a limited fashion, do not exist. Similarly, the index does not indicate whether library service output levels are appropriate for the library's community, nor the extent to which services sufficiently address community needs. We encourage libraries to analyze their own operational and community demographic data locally in order to address these two vital assessment issues.

What the star rating really measures is the volume of interaction with the community, not how well we have done.

As for the rating itself, since inception HCLS has been given a five star rating. Only in 2022, did HCLS receive a four star. This is how Ms. Aikens analyzed the drop as recorded in the Library Board of Trustees minutes:

I then explained the Library Journal star ranking for 2022 in which HCLS dropped from five stars to four. The most recent ratings are based on 2020 data which was right in the middle of the pandemic. Many factors added to the 2022 star ranking having the most variance ever, including differences in the number of months states, counties, and cities were open and the corresponding number of months library systems provided in-person or virtual service, levels and types of service provided, and differing methods of counting atypical services.

So, essentially, HCLS received a lower star because of Howard County's decision to limit in person activities compared to other jurisdictions, not because of comparisons in quality, which the LJ Index doesn't reflect anyway as shown in the FAQ.

Chris Krupiarz
Ellicott City, MD

Respass, Charity

From: DIANE BUTLER <politicodiane@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 29, 2023 12:24 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: You have got to be kidding me

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Do not support this needles expense! Please read this entire post. Fix the schools!

\$143 Million Lakefront Library in Downtown Columbia: Just Another Day in “Howard Hughes County”

The following images and numbers speak for themselves. The 100,000 sqft, **\$143 million cost** [Downtown Columbia, Maryland-based “Lakefront Library”](#), proposed by Howard County Executive Calvin Ball in partnership with developer [The Howard Hughes Corporation](#), is **over three times the cost per square foot** than any of the other recently-opened regional libraries shown here. Included below are final and accurate full closeout construction costs for these libraries, as reported by the builder.

	Cost (\$)	Size (Sq. Ft.)	Cost (\$) per Sq. Ft.	Location
Lakefront Library (Proposed)	143,000,000	100,000	1,430	Columbia, MD
Wheaton Regional Library	46,155,000	92,000	502	Silver Spring, MD
Elkridge Library & 50+ Center	17,402,000	45,000	387	Elkridge, MD
Silver Spring Library	39,670,000	90,000	440	Silver Spring, MD
Fairfax Regional Library	16,063,000	45,000	357	Fairfax, VA
Enoch Pratt Library Annex	12,000,000	51,000	235	Baltimore, MD
Talbott Springs Elementary School	32,200,000	88,229	365	Columbia, MD
Guilford Park High School	98,000,000 (estimated)	289,131	339	Jessup, MD

PROPOSED LAKEFRONT LIBRARY COLUMBIA, MD – 20.

100,000 Sq. Ft. Cost **\$143,000,000** Cost per Sq. Ft. **\$1,430.**



GUILFORD PARK HIGH SCHOOL (HIGH SCHOOL #1)

289,131 Sq. Ft. Cost **\$130,700,000 (estimate)**, **\$88,000,000 (actual)**



TALBOTT SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COLUMBIA,

88,229 Sq. Ft.

Cost **\$32,200,000**

Cost per Sq. Ft. **\$365**



ELKRIDGE LIBRARY & 50+ CENTER ELKRIDGE, MD.

2018

45,000 Sq. Ft. Cost \$17,402,000 Cost Per Sq. Ft. \$387.



WHEATON REGIONAL LIBRARY SILVER SPRING, MD.

2019

92,000 Sq. Ft. Cost \$46,155,000 Cost Per Sq. Ft. \$502.



SILVER SPRING LIBRARY SILVER SPRING, MD.

2015

90,000 Sq. Ft. Cost \$39,670,000 Cost Per Sq. Ft. \$440.



FAIRFAX REGIONAL LIBRARY FAIRFAX, VA. - 2008

45,000 Sq. Ft. Cost \$16,063,000 Cost Per Sq. Ft. \$357. Including 200 Structured Parking Spaces



ENOCH PRATT LIBRARY ANNEX BALTIMORE, MD. - 2003

51,000 Sq. Ft. Cost \$12,000,000 Cost Per Sq. Ft. \$235.



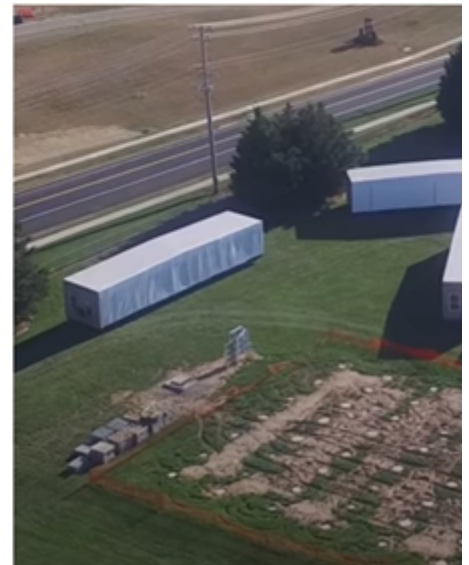
At 45,000 sqft, the **Elkridge Library & 50+ Center** that opened in 2018 is approximately half the size of the proposed Lakefront Library, yet cost over \$125 million less (over eight times less) to build at just \$17.4 million.

The Silver Spring-based **Wheaton Regional Library** which opened in 2019 boasts a 92,000 sqft structure, including library, full community center with gym, and an accompanying parking garage...all for ~\$46.2 million.

A neighboring Silver Spring Library that opened in 2015 with a 90,000 sqft structure cost just \$39.7 million.

Thousands of Howard County students spend every school day in one of the over 240 trailers (“relocatable classrooms”) currently residing at HCPSS schools. These trailers are weather and security threats, poorly ventilated, and far less functional learning environments than standard in-building classrooms. An upcoming HoCo Watchdogs post will be covering this issue in much greater detail.

HCPSS RELOCATABLE CLASSROOMS



Another full 1,600+ student capacity high school could be built with funds left to spare for the proposed cost of the Lakefront Library.

At least FOUR new 500+ student capacity elementary schools could be built with the funds that will be spent on this Lakefront Library, which proponents have proposed to serve as the replacement for an existing, fully functional 47,000 sqft Central Branch library that the county [spent \\$1.8 million dollars renovating](#) just 7 years ago.

Applying this \$143 million in funds to school construction & maintenance could get thousands of HCPSS students out of unsafe trailer classrooms and help to cut into the [almost half a billion dollars in deferred maintenance](#) that have left many HCPSS schools severely aging infrastructure that threaten the health and safety of students and staff.

According to page 3 of the [2024 Proposed Capital Budget](#), County Executive Ball and Howard Hughes plan to spend **\$11 million dollars just to have plans developed for this Lakefront Library. 33% of the cost of Talbott Springs Elementary School and 65% of the cost to build the Elkridge Library & 50+ Center.....**just for the plans for this Lakefront Library!!!****

**Shared from a watchdog group
Diane Butler**